THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir. Data released subsequently by Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) on 10th December, 1999, reveal that the growth rate of industrial production has improved and that during October, 1999 the growth rate was 8.7% against 0.0% during October last year.

(b) to (d) The steps taken to improve industrial production, interalia, are:

1. special package announced for revival of growth in exports;
2. repeal of ULCRA and incentive to house ownership;
3. the Government has allowed buy back of shares and inter-corporate loans to boost investment and revive the capital market;
4. a new power policy announced;
5. excise duties rationalized;
6. Income tax rate and custom duties on infrastructure projects reduced;
7. liberalization of inflow of FDI/NRI/OCB investment and the guidelines for foreign equity investment in NBFC have further been modified;
8. setting up of Foreign Investment Implementation Authority (FIIA) to provide single point interface between foreign investors and Government machinery;
9. setting up of National Accreditation Boards including a National Patent Office and a National Benchmarking Patent House to promote integration of best practices in the Indian Industry;
10. restoration of 100% MODVAT credit;
11. reduction in CRR;
12. withdrawal of interest rate surcharge on import finance.

Trade Deficit

*1855. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of trade deficit of the country for the last five year

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) As per the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics data the trade deficit during the last five years in US $ terms is as under:—

Year	Trade deficit (US $ Million)
1994-95	2324
1995-96	4881
1996-97	5662
1997-98	6478
1998-99	8245*

*Provisional data

(b) and (c) Trade deficit is the excess of imports over exports which can be restricted by effective export promotion measures. A number of export promotion measures are continuously being taken by the Government which includes reduction in transaction cost through decentralisation, simplification of procedures and various other measures as enumerated in the Exim Policy. Steps have also been taken to promote exports through multilateral and bilateral initiatives, identification of thrust sectors and focus regions.

Industrial Growth Centres

1856. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise industrial growth centres functioning in the different parts of the country, particularly in the State of Assam; and

(b) the details of funds granted to all growth centres during each of the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) A list of growth